

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Currently Amended) A method for forming an interlayer insulation film, comprising ~~the steps of:~~

[[ (1) ]] forming an etching stopper film of a silicon nitride film on an entire surface including a step part on a semiconductor substrate, the step part having the step part with an aspect ratio of  $\geq 3$  and being formed between gates on the semiconductor substrate;

[[ (2) ]] forming an interlayer insulation film of an impurity-doped silicate film on the silicon nitride film; and

[[ (3) ]] performing reflow of the interlayer insulation film by a heat treatment, wherein the formation of the silicon nitride film is controlled such that the N-H bond density of the silicon nitride film is  $1.0 \times 10^{22}$  pieces/cm<sup>3</sup> or less.

2. (Original) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the silicon nitride film is formed by a low pressure thermal CVD method at a temperature of 450°C to 700°C.

3. (Original) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the silicon nitride film is formed by a plasma CVD method.

4. (Original) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the heat treatment is conducted in a furnace at a temperature of 700°C to 770°C under an N<sub>2</sub> atmosphere.